

## **San Luis Drainage Feature Re-Evaluation**

**U.S. Department of the Interior – Bureau of Reclamation**

# **SAN LUIS DRAINAGE FEATURE RE-EVALUATION**

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## ***Briefing for the San Joaquin River Settlement Group***

***September 18, 2002 – Los Banos, California***

## ***Alternatives Development & Screening***

## ***Meeting Summary***

Reclamation provided a briefing for the San Joaquin River Settlement Group on the progress in developing and evaluating drainage service alternatives. The Settlement Group provided information to Reclamation on their activities to develop and implement near-term drainage solutions to comply with current and future water quality requirements.

### ***Project Overview and Alternatives Refinement Process***

Mike Delamore and Jason Phillips, Reclamation, provided an overview of the project, including a brief review of the process to formulate alternatives around disposal options.

**Deep Well Injection** – Participants asked about the status of deep well injection as a possible disposal option. Jason explained that, there is not sufficient information on the physical feasibility of deep well injection to include it as an alternative at this time. Reclamation has initiated a technical study to determine if deep well injection could be a feasible disposal option for the quantity of drainage from the San Luis Unit.

**Source Control Measures** – Terry Cooke and Joe McGahan provided a brief overview of the source control options Reclamation considered to determine the size of the drainage collection, treatment, and disposal systems. Jason clarified that Reclamation identified the source control measures that appeared economically viable when compared to drainage service, but farmers and water districts would be free to select those measures that they believed would best meet their needs to reduce drainage volume. Participants noted that some source control measures might be less expensive when you consider the value of the irrigation water saved that could be transferred to other users. The Reclamation team stated that, because the area is typically in water shortage, the initial assumption was that water saved would stay within the water district and not be sold elsewhere.

**Regional Reuse** – Terry Cooke reviewed the initial assumptions and conclusions about regional reuse facilities and the benefits of volume reduction and seasonal storage to reduce the size of treatment and disposal. Some participants were concerned that using the regional reuse facilities for seasonal storage may not be feasible.

**Alternatives** – Jason Phillips reviewed the four alternatives remaining for evaluation. Scott Irvine reviewed the features of the In-Valley Alternative. Participants were concerned about potential mitigation areas for evaporation ponds and that these wetlands areas might create additional drainage problems. Jason noted the preliminary costs of the In-Valley Alternative are in the range of \$700 to 800 million, with about half of these costs for source control and collection.

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**Time to Implement** – Participants asked how Reclamation is considering the time to implement a solution. Jason indicated that time to implement is an important criterion in developing the long-term plan.

**Land Retirement** – Participants asked how the plans would change if Westlands retired 200,000 acres. Jason said that the team will present information in the December report showing how the drainage service alternatives would change if 200,000 acres were taken out of production, including the cost of facilities to provide drainage service for the remaining lands.

**Repayment** – Participants asked when the costs of a drainage service plan would have to be repaid. Mike Delamore noted that Reclamation has not addressed repayment issues yet.

### ***Near-term Actions***

The Settlement Group is considering various actions to accomplish near-term reductions in drainage need. They are working to identify specific geographic areas where these actions could be implemented. Many of these actions correspond to the source control measures identified by Reclamation. The Settlement Group would like to continue information exchange and coordination to be sure that respective plans are coordinated and appropriate funding is identified.

### ***Information Exchange***

As the Reclamation team develops more detailed designs for the alternatives, they would like to review available local information and consider pilot projects to develop additional information. Specifically, the team would like more information on field data from the RO facility, pilot testing of selenium treatment of water from reuse facilities, site specific information on soils and groundwater for facility siting, and any data collected on pilot projects (e.g., groundwater pumping). The Settlement Group is interested in additional information from Reclamation on the mitigation plans for evaporation ponds and coordination on facility locations.

### ***Funding***

The Settlement Group is interested in pursuing funding for specific interim actions that could contribute to the long-term solution. Mike Delamore noted that once a preliminary preferred long-term plan is identified in December, it will be easier to focus resources on actions that contribute to that long-term plan. The participants discussed several potential sources of funding for interim projects, including Reclamation's Science & Technology Program grants, CALFED grants, and potential sale of water saved.

### ***Follow-up Actions***

- Reclamation plans to release a report on the preliminary preferred alternative in December 2001
- The Settlement Group will target December for an interim action plan.
- Scott Irvine will coordinate through David Cory on site-specific information needs.
- Scott Irvine and Terry Cooke will coordinate with David Cory on pilot testing information exchange and potential additional pilot tests to be performed.

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### ***Participants***

Steve Chedester, San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority

David Cory, San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority

Jeff Bryant, Firebaugh Canal Water District

Dora Rosas, Broadview Water District

Thad Bettner, Westlands Water District

Michael Delamore, Reclamation

Jason Phillips, Reclamation

Scott Irvine, Reclamation

Terry Cooke, URS Corporation

Joe McGahan, Summers Engineering

Charles Gardiner, Public Affairs Management